

APPENDIX

Leo Strauss, *Thoughts on Machiavelli*: The Headings

PRELIMINARY REMARK

Upon a visit with Professor Jenny Strauss Clay in Charlottesville in November 1994, she made available to me a number of manuscripts, notes, and other documents from the estate of her father. Among them was the manuscript of *Thoughts on Machiavelli*. When I saw the clean copy written by Leo Strauss with an ink pen, I noticed that the author had not only numbered all the paragraphs chapter by chapter, but also, deviating from his usual practice, furnished each of them with a heading. I later transcribed the headings and shared them with friends.

The transcript, which is being made public here for the first time, reproduces all the headings exactly as Leo Strauss noted them for himself before he wrote the paragraphs of the book. Supplements that he made in pencil are indicated. Abbreviations and shorthand expressions were not eliminated in order to leave entirely untouched the private character of the notations. For the headings were not meant for publication. I also include the dates of the manuscript by which Strauss, following a habit maintained over decades, recorded for himself the periods of time during which he worked on his texts.

The manuscript of *Thoughts on Machiavelli*, one of the great philosophic books of the twentieth century, has been archived in the Leo Strauss Papers, Department of Special Collections, University of Chicago Library since 1995. The transcript of the headings is published with the kind permission of Professor Nathan Tarcov, Literary Executor of the Estate of Leo Strauss.

Munich, September 20, 2015
H. M.

Thoughts on Machiavelli

Introduction and Chapter I: 2.3.1956–25.3.1956; 25.7.–16.8.1956

Introduction.

- 1 M. a wicked teacher of wickedness.
- 2 M. *the* wicked teacher of wickedness.
- 3 The simple minded view attacked by the sophisticated.
- 4 It is misleading to call M. a patriot or a scientist.
- 5 M. may have been a teacher of wickedness, although or rather because he was a patriot or a scientist.
- 6 [no heading, originally no separate paragraph]
- 7 = 6 The denial of his wickedness due to his influence.
- 8 = 7 It is necessary to understand M. from the front, not from the back.
- 9 = 8 M. a fallen angel—a theoretical man.
- 10 = 9 M. and the USA.
- 11 [no heading, originally no separate paragraph]
- 12 = 10 Our task: recovery of the permanent *problem*.

I The <dual> twofold character of M.' teaching.

- 1 Two books whose relation is obscure.
- 2 *Prince* : *Disc.* = principalities : republics.
- 3 Since republics are not timely, *De rep.* becomes *Disc.*
- 4 Objections.
- 5 Each of the two books contains everything M. knows—no difference of subject matter.
- 6 On the extent of M. knowledge.
- 7 [no heading, inserted by Strauss as paragraph 6a]
- 8 = 7 The 2 books distinguished by their addressees: actual princes ≠ potential princes.
- 9 = 8 *Prince*: brief, urgent, call to action—*Disc.*: the opposites.
- 10 = 9 *Prince* : master—*Disc.* : friends.
- 11 = 10 *Prince* less straightforward than *Disc.*
- 12 = 11 First appearance of *Prince* more traditional than that of *Disc.*
- 13 = 12 Reticences of the *Prince*.
- 14 = 13 The *Disc.* too are not altogether frank.
- 15 = 14 The *Prince* in some respects more frank than the *Disc.*

16 = 15 Is M.' perspective identical with that of *Prince*, or of *Disc.*, or different from both?

17 = 16 How to read M. [in pencil:]—as he read Livy.

18 = 17 According to M., Livy reveals his opinions (= his disagreement with common view) most clearly by silence.

19 = 18 M.' silences: silence about *this* world, *this* life, hell, devil and soul.

20 = 19 His allusion to eternity—creation and to human origin of Christianity.

21 = 20 His allusion in the beginning of the *Prince* to the problem of the Church.

22 = 21 Censorship → concealment.

23 = 22 - - -

24 = 23 Manifest blunders are intentional.

25 = 24 M., being a clever enemy, is intelligent but not moral.

26 = 25 Contradiction—here: he cannot introduce the new except by appealing primarily to ancient antiquity.

27 = 26 Difference between headings and bodies of chapters: M. does not indicate in headings that the Roman nobility used religion or deception in order to control the plebs.

28 = 27 M.' intention: quasi impossible combination of gravity and levity.

29 = 28 Alludes to difficulty of knowing his *enemy's* intention.

30 = 29 Parody of scholastic disputation—(3 impostors)—M. uses enemy of Christianity in order to say truth about Christianity.

31 = 30 Repetitions.

32 = 31 Digressions.

33 = 32 Ambiguous terms.

34 = 33 Numbers.

35 = 34 M.' blasphemy.

36 = 35 Numbers continued.

37 = 36 Conclusion.

II. M.' Intention: The *Prince*

22.8.56–6.10.56

1 A treatise.

2 —and a tract for the times.

3 The movement of the *Prince* is ascent followed by descent: the <descent> center is the peak.

- 4 Movement of first part: from the familiar, Here, Now, ordinary to the unfamiliar, ancient, rare, and thereafter descent. [Pencil note above *unfamiliar, ancient*: the highest theme.]
- 5 Movement of the 2nd part: quick ascent to the roots of traditional understanding of the greatest doers.
- 6 Movement in ch. 15–23: ascending to full truth about greatest doers which implies uprooting of Great Tradition, and then descent.
- 7 Movement in 4th part of *Prince*.
- 8 Tradition → timeless truth (≠ tract for the times) is related to time because it is new or revolutionary (≠ traditional)
- 9 “Treatise—tract” must be understood in the light of “traditional—revolutionary”.
- 10 The specific difficulty caused by “tract” (= ch. 26): silence about the political conditions of liberation of Italy.
- 11 Political conditions of liberation of Italy presented surreptitiously in ch. 3–5.
- 12 Liberation of Italy requires complete revolution, especially re: morality.
- 13 Secularization of the Church—break with Christianity.
- 14 The theme of the *Prince*: prince, but especially new prince.
- 15 Ambiguity of “new prince”.
- 16 Addressee of *Prince* is advised to become an imitator.
- 17 —an imitator of Moses → he will not conquer Italy.
- 18 The appeal to religion in ch. 26 is sufficient proof of the exoteric character of the particular council given in ch. 26.
- 19 M., the enemy of Fortuna, tries to become the adviser of Lorenzo, the favorite of Fortuna.
- 20 M. not only adviser of Lorenzo but teacher of an indefinite multitude.
- 21 M. the new Chiron, not a mere man (he replaces Christ).
- 22 The shockingly novel teaching concealed by ch. 26.
- 23 M.’ patriotism.
- 24 His pedagogic policy: toughening up.
- 25 M. the new prince, the new Moses.
- 26 But M. is an unarmed prophet—is he not bound to fail?

III. M.’ Intention: The *Discorsi*.

26.10.–23.12.; 26.3.–27.5.57

- 1 *Disc.* → republics = peoples → more frank: *Disc.* chief source of M.’ rhetoric.
- 2 *Disc.*: new modes, orders = modes and orders of antiquity.

- 3 *Disc.*: proof that ancient rules and orders can and ought to be imitated by modern men.
- 4 *Disc.*: not to return to rules and practices of the ancients.
- 5 *Disc.*: Livy I–X—united Italy controlled by a hegemonial republic.
- 6 Intention of *Disc.* → the typical chapter—but a great variety re: character of chapters.
- 7 The typical chapter of *Disc.* (III 7) → *Disc.* deal with the horrors inherent in the ultimate causes, and: → general rules re human conduct derived from ancient, modern examples (≠ proof of superiority of ancients to moderns).
- 8 M. is compelled to argue dialectically: he appeals to a prejudice in favor of class. antiquity.
- 9 M. is compelled to establish the authority of ancient Rome or of Livy: ancient Rome the known πατριον → Livy M.' Bible.
- 10 On his way from ancient Egypt to ancient Rome M. by-passes the Bible.
- 11 M. : Rome, Livy = theological apologetics : Bible.
- 12 M.' purpose ≠ Livy's purpose → M.' subject is not Rome at all—it is at least as much Asiatic as it is Roman.
- 13 M.' Livy ≠ Livy's plan: the authority of the Livian order asserts itself when the light of M.' plan is dimmed.
- 14 Plan of *Disc.* II—M. impresses his form on Livian matter—*Disc.* II devoted to critique of Christianity.
- 15 Plan of *Disc.* III: private counsel about private benefit; and: why not "use of Livy", but "references to Livy".
- 16 Plan of *Disc.* III: founder—captain; multitude; M. himself.
- 17 M. another Fabius: the incredibility of his <enterprise> exploration of the Ciminian Forest secures him against detection.
- 18 First Latin Livy quote prepared by complete break with authority or with αγαθον = πατριον.
- 19 First Latin Livy quotes re religion: need for Livian authority for attack on Christianity—M. changes Livian stories to facilitate <use> imitation of ancient religion by modern men.
- 20 Second Latin Livy quotes (density) in I 40: perfect neutrality re tyranny—freedom—connection between Christianity and tyranny.
- 21 First Livy references (I 7–8)—ancient Rome : modern Florence, ancient Tuscany = politics : religion = accusations : calumnies = aristocracy : democracy.
- 22 Criticism of Rome after contrast between moderate foundation of Roman republic and barbarian foundation of Moses' kingdom → not Rome, but Livy, a book, is *the* authority → entirely new modes and orders.
- 23 M.' "faith" in Rome's authority undergoes a radical change in the progress from *Disc.* I 6 to I 59.

- 24 Criticism of Rome in *Disc.* II: Rome criticized not only on political grounds but also as trailblazer for, and model of, the Church; the Romans themselves did not believe in authority.
- 25 Criticism of Rome in III → the Romans were religious—M. is an enemy of the Romans because he is irreligious—not religion but necessity produces the highest virtue.
- 26 Teaching of *Disc.* transmitted between the covers of *Disc.* and of Livy; Livy M.' theological authority: the authority as [regards] Fortuna.
- 27 Criticism of Livy in *Disc.* I 1–57: questionable character of histories; Livy's errors on virtue and on plebs.
- 28 Criticism of authority in general in *Disc.* I 1–57: connection between "belief" and "people".
- 29 M. attacks in I 58 all writers and authority as such: reason, youth, modernity stand up against authority, old age and antiquity.
- 30 M. attacks the whole tradition on democratic grounds; by this he intimates that the people (≠ ἐπικρείς) are the depositories of morality and religion.
- 31 M.' democratism follows from ironical premise that morality is the highest, from his being a revolutionary = upstart, from the necessity always to appeal to some ἔνδοξον.
- 32 *Prince* : *Disc.* = founder : people (Bible)—*Disc.* closer to ἔνδοξα because it contains more detailed destructive analysis of ἔνδοξα.
- 33 M. makes the ancient Romans "better", i.e. less religious and moral, than they were.
- 34 *Disc.* II pr.—there is nothing wrong if a Christian becomes a Turk—higher rank of works of art, writings than of deeds.
- 35 *Disc.* II 1: M. disagrees with Livy and the Roman people re: fear of fortune, but distinguishes between Livy and his characters: Livy perhaps not only expositor but also critic of pagan theology.
- 36 Peculiarities of Livy treatment in *Disc.* II–III: Livy ≠ his characters; sermons on Livian texts; Livy fa fede and è testimone.
- 37 By using enemies of Rome as his characters, Livy succeeds in being not only the expositor of pagan theology but also its critic: his *History* contains both the Roman fraud and its detection.
- 38 M. uses Livy book as an instrument (quā expositor of pagan theology) and as a model (quā critic of it) for his criticism of Bible—Livy a character of M.
- 39 Since Biblical writers do not use enemies of Bible as their mouthpieces, one must use pagan literature to discover truth re Bible; pagan letters preserved by persecuting Biblical religion because the latter is "disarmed".
- 40 Particular incredibility of Bible due to miracles—hence special need for extra-Biblical elects.

- 41 The self-deception of Biblical writers → God : Biblical writers = Livy : characters of Livy.
- 42 Biblical writers “make” God say and do what a perfect being as they conceive of it, ought to say and do.
- 43 Livy consciously creates perfect captains (Biblical writers create their great captain unconsciously), hence Livy (≠ Bible) corrects his creation.
- 44 Function of treating Ought as Is: creating hope; perfect beings needed for mastering τυχη : perfect beings are causes of τυχηρα. Livy presents criticism of Roman religion by using characters of characters or by using Romans addressing different audiences. Patricians : plebs = clergy : laity.
- 45 “Fabius” disregards auspices, debunks a dictator’s holy zeal and gets away with it.
- 46 M. abandons “Livy the teacher of Oughts” as soon as his own intention becomes the theme (i.e. in III 35–49).
- 47 M. wages a new war against a new enemy in new territory—for his purpose he must be a knower of sites in Livy.
- 48 The first two Livian sermons: Primacy of love or charity leads to pious cruelty.
- 49 The third sermon: the moderns trust Fortuna, the ancients tempted Fortuna.
- 50 “Authority—reason” in center of central book (II 10–24) → the greatest sin consists in lack of presumption.
- 51 Tacitus is treated as authority par excellence because he is the greatest historian who speaks about the origins of Judaism and Christianity.
- 52 M. is converted by his credere Tacitus from love to fear (to Moses) and from the preserver to the founder.
- 53 Christ is the synthesis of gentleness and severity—his pride.
- 54 M. attacks principle of authority by denying primacy of Love and asserting primacy of Terror → a modest and humane goal—no paradise but therefore no hell.
- 55 M. communicates the new modes and orders to all, but their ground (atheism) only to the young.
- 56 M. is less a conspirator than a corruptor of the coming generations.
- 57 The end of Christianity—can be hastened by M.’ action.
- 58 M.’ hope rests on split between ardent and lukewarm Christians = lovers of heavenly and earthly fatherland.
- 59 M. imitates Christ by propaganda (≠ sacrificial death).

IV. Machiavelli’s teaching

IV 1–42: finished August 31, 1957

- 1 Captatio benevolentiae for myself and for M.—esotericism and philosophy.
- 2 M. not a “pagan” but a *savio del mondo*, i.e. a *faylasûf* [written in Arabic].
- 3 M.’ silence about Bible not due to ignorance or indifference.
- 4 First statement on essence of Christianity: Christianity has rendered the world weak without making it more God-fearing.
- 5 2nd statement on essence of Christianity → Christianity has not shown the truth—humility and the God who assumed humiliation.
- 6 Third statement: absurdity of do not resist evil.
- 7 Specimen of our argument: M. seemingly wrong but actually right.
- 8 Weakness of moderns: no modern empire and no strong modern republics.
- 9 Christianity stems from the servile East and a weak Eastern nation.
- 10 Christianity → rule of priests = most tyrannical rule.
- 11 Rational account of victory of Christianity.
- 12 Christian strength and good Christian soldiers: Love—consuming fire—hell—stake → pious cruelty and fanatical zeal.
- 13 *Propria gloria* (consciousness of excellence) vs. *gloria Dei* (consciousness of sin)—for: necessity to sin.
- 14 Humanity and goodness vs. humility and cruelty.
- 15 Conscience replaced by *prudenza*.
- 16 Providence: M. does not distinguish between the core and the periphery of Bible; he identifies providence with God being a just King.
- 17 Providence in *I. F.*: God saves the Florentines by threatening his Vicar with the Infidels.
- 18 God is a neutral.
- 19 Denial of providence and of immortality of the soul.
- 20 Denial of man’s being the cause of evil and sin → denial of creation.
- 21 Need for recourse to “Averroism” in order to understand M.
- 22 No shred of evidence in favor of revelation.
- 23 Biblical phenomena matched by pagan phenomena.
- 24 In the light of *Livy* (reason) Christianity appears as an abortive populist movement.
- 25 Monotheism: present misery—hope for future—polytheism: present splendor and no hope.
- 26 Practically the whole criticism of revelation is Aristotelian—only the opposite of humility is not humanity but magnanimity.
- 27 *Disc.* silent about God’s or gods’ existence.
- 28 M. replaces God by *Cielo* or *Cieli*—by *Fortuna*.

- 29 M.' tentative theology: there exist compassionate intelligences in the air (≠ angry and cruel gods).
- 30 M. replaces "signs" by "accidents".
- 31 Fortuna an improved image of the Biblical God.
- 32 Fortuna = extrinsic accident [in pencil:]—not hopes, but regulate Fortuna.
- 33 Fortuna far from being heaven has a subordinate place within heaven; cannot be completely controlled by man → ἀταραξία (≠ conquest of chance).
- 34 The emergence of gods out of cooperation of τυχή and fraud.
- 35 Contradiction between omnipotence and freedom.
- 36 Break with Ar.—turn towards "Democritus".
- 37 M. prefers "Aristippus—Diogenes" to Ar.
- 38 Religion is essentially untrue belief.
- 39 Religion salutary—? It stems from weakness of mind and fosters such weakness.
- 40 Fear of God can be replaced by fear of prince—a prince cannot be religious.
- 41 Even in republics, function of religion can be discharged by other methods.
- 42 Religion *is* needed, especially for the multitude.
- 43 Incomprehension of M. (and his successors) due to our being under the spell of post French Revolution outlook.
- 44 M. more explicit re morality than re religion since morality is less grave an issue than religion.
- 45 M.' moral-pl. teaching (≠ teaching on religion) is radically new—taking one's bearing by how men live (≠ how they ought to live)—point of view of practitioner and therefore normative.
- 46 M. reproduces ἔνδοξα: goodness = moral virtue or = unselfishly benefitting others—is happiness (or way to happiness)—onesto ≠ onorevole
- 47 Conflict between ἔνδοξα (λογοί) and ἔργα → conflict between λογοί; difference between public and private λογοί.
- 48 Virtue as mean: equanimity has only one opposite vice which merely appears as two opposite defects.
- 49 Virtue as mean: liberality is not the good mean between prodigality and stinginess—stinginess is required by justice.
- 50 The right way (the life κατὰ φύσιν) is indeed a mean—yet a mean not between opposite vices but between virtue and vice.
- 51 M. rejects via del mezzo because it is connected with notion of summum bonum and ens perfectissimum, i.e. a good perfectly free from evil.
- 52 Virtue is voluntary: M. defends liberum arbitrium against Fortuna (God) [inserted in pencil:] Man can be the master of his fate [end of insertion]—but:

chance is based on nature and necessity → what is the relation of freedom and necessity?

53 [inserted as a new paragraph:] Virtue incompatible with necessity but also = submission to necessity [added in pencil:]—for: necessity to sin.

54 [originally: 53] Men are compelled by their natures to act in specific ways—extraordinary virtue is a gift of nature (not voluntary) compelling its holder—similarly stupidity.

55 [originally: 54] The necessity which causes men to operate well is fear of violent death to be avoided only by actions against men's natural inclination.

56 [originally: 55] The necessity which <makes> causes men to operate well (justly and industriously) is hunger (→ crucial importance of property).

57 The necessity which makes men good is compulsion exerted by laws, by government.

58 Yet, choice : necessity = founder : people = strong : weak → not necessity but wise choice makes men operate well.

59 Choice (ambition, glory) are themselves necessary; it makes men[,] superior men operate well; necessity to make man operate well must be known as such.

60 Operating well depends on chance; but malleability of matter; above all: man can be master of his fate only by *knowledge* of necessity.

61 M. attacks class. p. philosophy with a view to the fact that men are bad.

62 Virtue presupposes society → society cannot be based on morality but only on immorality.

63 The end of society is not virtue but the common good; republican virtue (≠ moral virtue) the means for the common good.

64 Republican virtue ≠ moral virtue.

65 End justifies means → moral = ordinary, immoral = extraordinary.

66 Common good demands even sacrifice of republican virtue.

67 A patriotic intermezzo.

68 Moral virtue = requirements of living together absolutized.

69 Case for principalities = questioning of the common good in the name of private good (freedom of opinion).

70 Case for principalities: humanity demands acceptance of corruption; prudent selfishness of prince sufficient for making him a good prince; virtue = prudent and strong selfishness.

71 Collective selfishness of ruling class in city; perfect republican virtue due to a specific temper, not to προαιρεσις.

72 The case for tyranny.

73 The case for tyranny—continued.

- 74 The selfish consideration.
- 75 Oppression coeval with society → only difference of degree between best republic and worst tyranny.
- 76 for: men are bad—i.e. selfish.
- 77 The principles of M.' statecraft: men's selfishness and the need for selfreliance (→ virtù).
- 78 M.' neutrality re "republics—tyrannies": the only simply common good is the truth.
- 79 Pol. common good supplemented on the same plane by strictly private good (love) → quest for truth = synthesis of gravity and levity.
- 80 Desire for glory → quest for truth quā beneficial truth (≠ detachment) → bias in favor of republics.
- 81 Delusion of glory → *the* motive is desire for truth—gravity : levity = knowledge of truth : communication of knowledge.
- 82 M. breaks with the whole Socratic tradition—he forgets Socrates.
- 83 He forgets tragedy.
- 84 He sees only the social source of morality: he forgets the soul.
- 85 Obfuscation of philosophy and its status → *appearance* of radical novelty.
- 86 Philosophy → gulf between philosophers and δημος → punitive rhetoric; M. accepts τέλη του δήμου, because popular—conquest of nature—lowering of standards.
- 87 The entering wedge of M.' criticism: encouragement of inventions re war—no periodic cataclysms—need for reformulation of "beneficence of nature".

Finis—Laus Deo.

December, 9, 1957.